

My name is Sandy Goldsberry and I've been living in Sandy Hook for the last year and a half. My 9 year old daughter was at Sandy Hook School on 12/14/12. She was one of the lucky ones who came home that day. But since she is autistic and unable to converse, we may never know what she saw or understands about what happened or how it may affect her in the future.

While I fully understand that we will never be able to be rid of all violence, including gun violence, I believe we should make it extremely difficult for anyone to kill 26 people in just a few minutes.

I served in the Army during peacetime. I was well trained in the use of the M16, which is a semi-automatic assault-rifle similar to the one used at Sandy Hook. I can't speak for wartime, but I can tell you that in peacetime, even though we were well-trained, we were not allowed to keep our weapons with us or simply store them in a personal locker. When not in use, these weapons were stored in the company armory. The ONLY time we were issued live rounds was when we were at a WELL-REGULATED range for target practice and qualification. And, then we were given the live rounds ONLY immediately before we were ready to shoot. During our training, it was also made very clear to us exactly how devastating the bullets from these weapons are to the human body. If the military, in peacetime, does not allow fully-trained soldiers to keep their weapons and live rounds, why would we think it's okay to let fully untrained civilians own and use these weapons?

Assault-rifles are not effective for game hunting and they are not practical or needed for home defense. They were developed for wartime for the single purpose of use in battle.

Regarding school safety, I firmly believe that arming our teachers is NOT the answer. I don't want to send my child to ANY school that has anyone other than a trained police officer carrying a loaded weapon. I believe it would add to the unreasonable stress that many of our teachers are already under. Imagine being a teacher and having to take a loaded weapon with you to school just to remain safe. Now consider that you're a woman in classrooms with young men much bigger than you are. You now have the added stress knowing that you're responsible for the gun not getting into the wrong hands. It's just not fair to our teachers that they have this added burden. If Adam Lanza hadn't had a weapon with the increased fire power like the semi-automatic weapon he used, it's very possible that he wouldn't have been able to gain entry into the school in the first place. I believe banning semi-automatic weapons is the biggest step we can take towards safety in our schools.

I urge congress to immediately enact a permanent ban on the manufacture, sale, and possession of the following:

1. Semi-automatic assault-type rifles, like the one used at Sandy Hook
2. High capacity magazines
3. Ammunition designed to pierce armor or to shatter after impacting the body

And I support the legislation that has been proposed by the organization Connecticut Against Gun Violence.

Thank you.